

Approved For Release 2004/10/13 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000200040007-5

'REFOUNDING'

Santa Barbara 'Think Tank' Alters Course

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SANTA BARBARA—Dr. Robert Maynard Hutchins, an educator, turned 70 in January. In September, his Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions will be 10 years old.

"As I told our group," Hutchins said last week, "anniversaries, like the prospect of immediate hanging, tend to powerfully concentrate the mind."

Disclosing plans to resign his administrative functions "at the earliest possible moment," Hutchins said he is first determined to "re-found" the center—bringing it closer to the true, independent community of scholars he has dreamed of most of his life.

This is the background of the recent reorganization of the renowned "think tank" located in a graceful home in the hills overlooking Santa Barbara.

5 Senior Fellows Dropped

Five of 18 senior fellows were dropped, asked to resign effective Aug. 31 and vacate their offices by July 5. Four others were relegated to administrative duties only. The status of two others remains to be decided. Seven were retained as senior fellows.

A large number of part-time "consultants" to the center also were dropped.

Plans are to add five to seven more fellows in the next year. Ten scholars—mainly from abroad—will come to Santa Barbara next month to look the center over for a week and give the remaining senior fellows a chance to look them over.

New financial resources—particularly a \$5 million bequest from the estate of the late Xerox millionaire Chester Carlson—and dramatic circulation gains, from 17,000 to 96,000 in 18 months, for the center's magazine provided an opportunity for Hutchins to act.

Now that the years of shoe-string financing are over and the center's continued existence seems assured, he believes he can better attract the scholars he wants.

And, various sources agree, there had been difficulties at the center, disagreements of approach among the senior fellows, and troubles with the dialog that formed a focus for the group's activities.

Dialogs Edited and Published

The dialogs—among the fellows themselves and frequently with outside visitors—were edited and then published, frequently in the magazine. Hutchins believes dialogs are one of the most effective means of intellectual inquiry, especially in the sense of clarifying issues.

But the fellows had been finding there were too many people around the table for "true dialog." The sessions frequently became a series of set speeches, or developed into interviews or sometimes gossip, and not all the fellows were contributing adequately. It was felt the number of those around the table had to be reduced.

Furthermore, some of the fellows—generally paid from \$18,000 to \$25,000 a year—were more active in center activities than others. The consultant concept of part-time participation, for its part, had not worked out very well.

So, according to virtually all sources, there were many reasons for a reorganization—but primarily it was Hutchins' desire to act before he got much older.

"Father sat back for 18 months and listened to the quibbling," said one man closely associated with the center. "Finally, father said, 'This is the way it's going to be.'"

After more than a year of inconclusive Wednesday afternoon meetings among the fellows, Hutchins said, "we had reached the point where the question was, who were to be senior fellows" in the reorganized center. This decision could not be reached by a group with members who would have to be excluded.

"Some initiative had to be taken by somebody," Hutchins explained.

Rapid Acceptance

There was rapid acceptance of his proposal that he appoint himself the first senior fellow and then select a second, that the two select a third and the three select a fourth and so on until a limit was reached where no further action by those selected.

"There is no doubt that the Wednesday afternoon discussions had come to an impasse," said Hallock Hoffman, son of Marshall Plan Administrator Paul G. Hoffman and one of the fellows dropped. "We clearly recognized that not everyone should stay, but that decision was beyond the group."

In a memo to his friends describing what had happened to him, Hoffman recalled that "Bob (Hutchins) suggested and most of us applauded the idea of making the work of the center more global, making it less restricted to institutional studies and adding several great thinkers from other countries, luminous minds whose scholarship, intellectual capacity and ability in the dialog would be outstanding."

The selection process suggested by Hutchins resulted in the selection of seven senior fellows. He selected Harvey Wheeler, coauthor of the book "Fail Safe" and a Harvard Ph.D. They chose Rexford Guy Tugwell, a braintruster in the Roosevelt Administration.

The three selected John Cogley, former religion editor of the New York Times. The four chose Harry S. Ashmore, a Pulitzer prize-winning newspaperman who had become executive vice president of the center. The five picked physicist John Wilkinson. Seventh choice was Elisabeth Mann Borgese, daughter of German novelist Thomas Mann and a scholar of international affairs.

Asked to resign were Hoffman; W. H. Ferry, a center vice president; John R. Seeley, a former Brandeis University sociologist who is dean of the center; Dr. James A. Pike, former Episcopal bishop of California, and Dr. William Gorman, a philosopher.

Transferred to administrative positions—without rights to participate in the dialogue—were Edward Reed, Donald MacDonald, Stanley K. Sheinbaum and

The status of educator Stringfellow Barr and Nobel chemist and peace prize-winner Dr. Linus Pauling was left up in the air. Dr. Pauling has been on leave the last two years to do research.

With the exception of Ferry and Seeley, those dismissed accepted their fate with reserve.

Ferry, who learned of the decision while vacationing in Scotland, said that for a while he was "desolate." He added, "for the first time in my life I spent a sleepless night. After all, I had spent 10 years and had expected to spend the rest of my days here and the intimation that I will not be able to do so was shattering."

Some sources at the center said Ferry had been critical of Hutchins in many respects over an eight-year period, and there was a reference in Ferry's remarks to personal discord.

Seeley, who had given up a chair at Brandeis for what he regarded as a promise of a permanent fellowship from Hutchins, declined public comment except to say he had placed the matter in the hands of his attorneys.

Dr. Pike—perhaps the best known of those dismissed—accepted it with equanimity. He recently became involved in a new foundation of his own in Santa Barbara, the Foundation of Religious Transition, established to help former priests and nuns.

"I take this on its face," Pike said. "Hutchins had a dream here and saw a chance to fulfill it... to bring about more pure thought and science, make it more international."

"Some of us were very active in the anti-Vietnam war movement... I think there will be more of academe, more of a think tank here now, a less activist group."

This interpretation is denied by Hutchins, who said there were "no ideological connotations at any point" in selecting the

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continued

fellows who remain.

"The only question," he said, "was the kind of people who will contribute most to the kind of institution we're dreaming about."

However, from some sources came suggestions there had been a split of sorts between the traditional, liberal scholars at the center and those involved in multiple outside activities, or those advocating a more emotional, sensory approach to intellectual inquiry.

In Hoffman's memo, he declares: "I have been struggling for some time to import more emotional and psychological qualities into our center community. I believe I have lost this struggle. I am pleased that the new fellows are a compatible group. If I had been the only additional one chosen, I would have hesitated to accept the invitation."

Hints of Dispute

Hints of the dispute also can be seen in an article entitled "Where Have All the Liberals Gone?" written for the current center magazine by Ashmore.

In this paper, Ashmore comments, "It is evident that Marx, and all the other radical philosophers who approached their analytic and dialectic task with the tools of scholarship and the standards of science, have given way to Freud as the godhead of liberation. A new sensibility has been proclaimed, in which the rational, insofar as it is admitted at all, is subordinate to the sensory."

Ashmore said the Wednesday afternoon session had been complicated because there was a group arguing against the use of any authority and committed to solving all problems by consensus. Since, as one other center official put it, those participating in the discussions "could hardly decide what to have for lunch," this proved impractical.

Some Resistance

The new senior fellowship is meant to share responsibility for administration of the center, in contrast to Hutchins' traditional primacy. Evidently, there was some resistance to this concept. Pike commented that he had come to the center "to do my own thing" and was bored by administration.

In a background statement prepared for the scholars who will visit the center next month, Hutchins promises that the fellows "will be autonomous. That is, they will select their own colleagues and determine their own program."

"They would also be free to decide whether or not they wanted students," he writes. "The seven senior fellows now in residence believe that young people should be admitted as assistants or junior partners. What should emerge would be a true university, one in which all the members were helping to educate one another."

"Everything seems to turn on whether qualified persons are willing to make the organization their major interest," Hutchins adds.

"The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions has seldom been able to deal successfully with persons whose major interest is in something else. This may have been our own fault."

"Still, our experience suggests that the central problem is the ability of the organization to attract qualified people who will commit themselves to it. . . . The kind of men they should be is fairly clear: they should be masters of their disciplines and at the same time philosophers, in the original sense of the word."

Hutchins also gives assurances that "all limitations resulting from the American background of the center and from the inclusion in its name of democratic institutions should be removed. The members should regard the center as a world university."



Robert M. Hutchins
(AP photo)

Hutchins said that while recruiting the top-ranked people he wants was

"going to take some time," he thought the idea would appeal to academic people "because the conditions of work on many campuses in many parts of the world today are no longer very simple, no longer conducive to what is called scholarship."

Among those coming to the center next month are Alexander Comfort, a British medical biologist and writer; Bertrand de Jouvenel, French economist and political philosopher; Mircea Eliade, Romanian historian and author living in the United States; Dr. Raul Prebisch, Argentine economist, and Jerome B. Wiesner, communications engineer, author and MIT dean.

Center officials hope they will be able to announce from one to three new fellows by the end of the summer and fill out the five they need within a year.

They plan, this fall, to launch a fund-raising campaign for a \$15 million endowment—the center's first. This hopefully would provide an annual endowment income of about \$1.5 million, filling half the annual financial needs of the institution, which has an annual budget of about \$3 million.

The \$5 million Carlson bequest will help keep the center going while the endowment is established. Hutchins made it clear that one background con-

sideration is his deep pessimism about the coming state of political affairs in the United States. He sees many signs of a new McCarthyism.

At one point, the educator, after a lengthy exchange on the U.S. situation, read his visitor a short story passed along to him by Russell Davenport, the late editor of Fortune.

"There was a dark day in New England in 1780 when the sun scarcely appeared at all," it began. "Thousands of people took it for the end of the world. Among them were many in the Connecticut Assembly in which Col. Abraham Davenport was sitting. It was proposed that the assembly adjourn."

"Col. Davenport said, 'the day of judgment is either approaching or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for adjournment. If it is, I choose to be found doing my duty. I wish, therefore, that candles may be brought.'"

Speaking with great seriousness, Hutchins drew the moral in these terms:

"There is some precedent in times like these to light a few candles—small illuminations—like we're trying to do here, and perhaps they will be kept burning in darker days. If we get a number of small candles burning, they might carry through."